

Message Text

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46

ACTION ACDA-10

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0122

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN REPS ON MARCH 11, 1975

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE MARCH 11 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY NETHERLANDS REP, UK REP AND US REP, AND THE EAST BY SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY, GDR REP OESER AND ACTING CZECHOSLOVAK REP MEISNER. EASTERN REPS SPOKE ALONG FAMILIAR LINES, PRAISING THE MERITS OF THEIR RECENT PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF THEIR DRAFT AGREEMENT AND ACCUSING THE WEST OF HAVING DEPARTED FROM PRINCIPLES AGREED IN THE PRELIMINARY TALKS. KHLESTOV ONCE AGAIN REFUSED TO DISCUSS DATA UNTIL ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN RESOLVED, CLAIMING THAT THE WEST TOO WAS REFUSING TO DISCUSS THE SPECIFICS OF REDUCTIONS BY NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS UNTIL AFTER THE ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN RESOLVED.

2. KHLESTOV BEGAN THE SESSION BY REASSERTING

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THAT THE EASTERN PROPOSALS OF FEBRUARY 25 WERE SIGNIFICANT

MOVES TOWARDS THE WESTERN POSITION. THE UK REP DEVELOPED THE ALLIED VIEW THAT ANY REDUCTION AGREEMENT WOULD CREATE IMPORTANT NEW ADVANTAGES FOR THE EAST BECAUSE IT WOULD RESULT IN A SITUATION WHERE THE TOTAL OF WESTERN FORCES IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS WOULD BE DECREASED AND LIMITED, WHEREAS SOVIET FORCES LOCATED ON THE ADJACENT TERRITORY OF THE USSR WOULD NEITHER BE DECREASED NOR LIMITED. GDR REP AGAIN ACCUSED THE WEST OF DEPARTING FROM PRINCIPLES AGREED DURING THE PRELIMINARY TALKS. HE CLAIMED THAT IN REFUSING TO REDUCE AIR FORCES AND NUCLEAR ELEMENTS, THE WEST WAS DEPARTING FROM THE AGREED SUBJECT MATTER OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH INCLUDED REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS. NETHERLANDS REP SAID THE EAST WAS STILL ADHERING TO THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF ITS ORIGINAL POSITION OF NOVEMBER 1973, THAT REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE SYMMETRICAL AND THAT EACH DIRECT PARTICIPANT SHOULD FROM THE OUTSET ASSUME SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS ON THE AMOUNT AND TIMING OF ITS REDUCTIONS. TO SPLIT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST TWO STAGES OF THE EASTERN PROPOSAL INTO TWO SUB-STAGES WITHOUT CHANGING THE CONTENT OF THESE STAGES WAS PURELY PROCEDURAL, WHILE EASTERN PROPOSALS FOR THE ALLOCATION OF REDUCTIONS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT IN THE FIRST STAGE MERELY AMOUNTED TO SPECIFICATION OF AN OPEN DETAIL IN THE ORIGINAL EASTERN PROPOSAL SINCE THE PROPOSED REDUCTIONS FOR EACH SIDE REMAINED AS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED. NETHERLANDS REP POINTED OUT THAT WHEREAS EASTERN MOVES THUS FAR HAD BEEN LARGELY PROCEDURAL, WESTERN MOVES HAD BEEN MOVES OF REAL SUBSTANCE.

3. NETHERLANDS REP POINTED OUT THAT, IF LIMITATIONS ON FORCE LEVELS WERE ALSO TO INCLUDE AIR FORCE MANPOWER AS THE WEST HAD NOW PROPOSED IN A MAJOR DEPARTURE FROM ITS ORIGINAL POSITION, THE EASTERN ADVANTAGES FROM ANY REDUCTION AGREEMENT WOULD BECOME EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT. ALL MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE AREA OF REDUCTIONS EXCEPT THE NAVY WOULD BE LIMITED. BUT NEITHER SOVIET GROUND FORCES NOR SOVIET AIR FORCE MANPOWER, LOCATED ON TERRITORY ADJACENT TO THE AREA, WOULD BE LIMITED. THIS SITUATION REINFORCED THE NEED TO ELIMINATE THE EXISTING DISPARITIES IN GROUND FORCES.

4. SMIRNOVSKY MADE STRONG ATTACK ON REFUSAL OF WEST EUROPEANS AND CANADIANS TO UNDERTAKE SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS FROM THE OUTSET ON THE AMOUNT AND TIMING OF THEIR REDUCTIONS.

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CZECHOSLOVAK REP REITERATED POINT RAISED IN RECENT BILATERAL REMARKS BY SOVIET REPS THAT EASTERN GOVERNMENTS WERE BEGINNING TO SUSPECT THE WEST OF DELIBERATELY USING THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS AS A COVER FOR FORCE BUILD-UP. US REP CRITICIZED MECHANISTIC AND INEQUITABLE EASTERN INTERPRETATION OF AGREEMENT REACHED IN THE PREPARATORY TALKS THAT FORCE REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE MUTUAL AND AGAIN REQUESTED EAST TO AT LEAST SPECIFY THE NUMERICAL AMOUNTS OF REDUCTIONS IT ITSELF

WAS PROPOSING. KHLESTOV ENDED THE SESSION WITH LENGTHY, LOGIC-CHOPPING EXPOSITION OF WHY EASTERN PROPOSALS WERE SUBSTANTIVE RATHER THAN PROCEDURAL, CLAIMING THAT THE WEST HAD MADE NO PROPOSALS OF COMPARABLE IMPORTANCE SINCE THE OUTSET OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

5. IT WAS AGREED THE NEXT INFORMAL SESSION WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 18. END SUMMARY.
REMAINDER OF REPORT BEING SENT VIA AIRGRAM.RESOR

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